

# CALIFORNIA OCCUPATIONAL GUIDES



## PARTS SALESPERSONS



### WHAT DOES A PARTS SALESPERSON DO?

PARTS SALESPERSONS, also known as counter clerks and parts clerks, sell replacement parts and accessories for machinery, appliances, or electronic equipment. Most of them work for new and used car dealers and auto parts, appliance, and home electronics stores. They also work in automobile repair and recycling shops and for truck, bus, motorcycle, boat, and farm equipment dealers. Other industries they work for include electronic equipment dealers such as television or computer, appliance dealers, repair shops, and hardware stores.

Parts Salespersons in automobile dealerships normally only sell parts and equipment for the line of cars the dealer

CALIFORNIA OCCUPATIONAL GUIDE - NUMBER 237  
2005

INTEREST AREA  
ENTERPRISING



sells, as do appliance dealers with the lines of appliances they sell. Those who work in the wholesale automobile parts businesses may sell to repair garages, retail shops, truck and bus companies, dealers, and the public.

Parts Salespersons perform the following tasks:

- Determine replacement part required, according to inspection of old part, customer request, or customer description of malfunction.
- Read catalog, computer display, or microfiche viewer to determine replacement part stock number and price.
- Fill customer orders from stock.
- Advise customer on substitution or modification of part when identical replacement is not available.
- Examine returned part for defects, and exchange defective part or refund money.
- Prepare sales slip or sales contract.
- Receive payment or obtain credit authorization.
- Receive and fill telephone orders for parts.
- Demonstrate equipment to customer and explain functioning of equipment.
- Discuss use and features of various parts, based on knowledge of machine or equipment.
- Measure parts, using precision measuring instruments to determine whether similar parts may be machined to required size.
- Place new merchandise on display.
- Mark and store parts in stockroom according to prearranged system.
- Take inventory of stock.
- Repair parts or equipment.

## WHAT SKILLS ARE IMPORTANT?

Important skills, knowledge, and abilities for Parts Salespersons include:

- Service Orientation – Actively looking for ways to help people.
- Social Perceptiveness – Being aware of others' reactions and understanding why they react as they do.
- Active Listening – Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.
- Reading Comprehension – Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work-related documents.
- Mathematics – Using mathematics to solve problems.
- Customer and Personal Service – Knowledge of principles and processes for providing customer and personal services. This includes customer needs assessment, meeting quality standards for services, and evaluation of customer satisfaction.
- Mechanical – Knowledge of machines and tools, including their designs, uses, repair, and maintenance.
- Sales and Marketing – Knowledge of principles and methods for showing, promoting, and selling products or services. This includes marketing strategy and tactics, product demonstration, sales techniques, and sales control systems.
- Clerical – Knowledge of administrative and clerical procedures and systems such as word processing, managing files and records, stenography and transcription, designing forms, and other office procedures and terminology.
- Oral Expression – The ability to communicate information and ideas in speaking so others will understand.
- Near Vision – The ability to see details at close range (within a few feet of the observer).

## WHAT'S THE WORK ENVIRONMENT?

Parts shops are usually reasonably clean, well lighted, heated, and air-conditioned, with the exception of some older parts stores and automobile recycling shops.

Parts Salespersons work indoors and often stand for long periods of time—walking and reaching both high and low for parts. They typically do much of their work between a chest-high counter and aisles of parts shelving.

Parts Salespersons interact daily with a large number and wide variety of people, in person and on the telephone. Handling customer complaints and returns, as well as interpreting the needs of customers who may not have mechanical knowledge, can be stressful at times.

### ***Union Membership***

There has been little or no unionization of this occupation

## WHAT'S THE CALIFORNIA JOB OUTLOOK?

The following information is from the occupational projections produced by the Employment Development Department (EDD) Labor Market Information Division (LMID):

### Parts Salespersons

Estimated number of workers in 2002:	20,500
Estimated number of workers in 2012:	21,500
Projected Growth 2002-2012:	4.9%
Est. openings due to separations by 2012:	5,900

*These figures do not include self-employment.*

Parts Salespersons will grow slower than average compared with all occupations in California. All openings will occur as workers enter another occupation or leave the workforce. An annual average of 690 job openings are expected through 2012.

### ***Trends***

Automobile and appliance parts are available on the Internet. Orders are filled by stock clerks and

order fillers, a trend that could further reduce the need for Parts Salespersons. Increasingly, electronic products and small appliances are cheaper to replace than repair.

## WHAT DOES THE JOB PAY?

### *California Earnings*

The following information is from the Occupational Employment Statistics Survey of Employers by EDD/LMID:

#### Parts Salespersons 2005 Wages

Hourly wages range from	\$10.08	to	\$20.08
Average hourly wage	\$16.15		
Average annual wage	\$33,593		

*These figures do not include self-employment.*

### *Hours*

Most Parts Salespersons work 40 or more hours per week. Night shifts and weekend shifts are common in this occupation, especially in the automotive parts and electronic industries.

### *Benefits*

Benefits usually include, sick leave, vacation, medical, dental, and vision insurance, and retirement plans.

## HOW DO I PREPARE FOR THE JOB?

### *Education and Training*

Most employers prefer to hire applicants with prior sales experience. Parts Salespersons usually train on the job and can be sent to employer- or manufacturer-sponsored training programs.

### *Licensing and Certification*

Licensing and certification are not required for Parts Salespersons in California. The National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) has a Parts Specialist Certification Program that can help career development and boost earnings for automobile Parts Salespersons.

### *Continuing Education*

Formal continuing education is not required for this occupation. However, workers constantly learn about the newest electronic and computerized systems and parts components, either on the job or through training.

## HOW DO I FIND THE JOB?

Direct contact remains one of the most effective job search methods. Most Parts Salespersons are employed in the automotive dealerships and parts stores. They also work in electronic and major appliance industries.

Search these **yellow page** headings for listings of private firms:

- Appliances – Major, Dealers and Service
- Appliances – Major, Parts and Supplies
- Automobile Dealers, New and Used Cars
- Automobile Parts, Recyclers and Dismantlers
- Automobile Parts, Supplies and Accessories
- Computer Dealers
- Computer Service and Repair
- Electronic Equipment and Supply Dealers
- Electronic Equipment and Supplies, Wholesale
- Television Dealers and Service

The following Internet resources can be helpful to the job search process:

America's Career InfoNet  
[www.acinet.org](http://www.acinet.org)

America's Job Bank  
[www.ajb.dni.us](http://www.ajb.dni.us)

CalJOBS<sup>SM</sup>  
[www.caljobs.ca.gov](http://www.caljobs.ca.gov)

Job Search and Resume Writing  
[www.worksmart.ca.gov/success\\_tips\\_menu.html](http://www.worksmart.ca.gov/success_tips_menu.html)

Local Job Service Offices  
[www.edd.ca.gov/jsrep/jsloc.htm](http://www.edd.ca.gov/jsrep/jsloc.htm)

Occupational Information Network (O\*NET) Online  
<http://online.onetcenter.org>

One-Stop Career Centers List  
[www.edd.ca.gov/ONE-STOP/pic.htm](http://www.edd.ca.gov/ONE-STOP/pic.htm)

For statewide and local projections, wages, employers by county, and other occupational information go to [www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov](http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov) and select *Find an Occupation Profile*.

## WHERE CAN THE JOB LEAD?

Parts Salespersons can become parts managers, distributors, or salespersons for manufacturers. Those who work in dealerships can also advance into salesperson positions for new and used cars and trucks or service writer positions. With additional training they can become automobile technicians or mechanics.

## OTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION

National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE)  
101 Blue Seal Drive, S.E. Suite 101  
Leesburg, VA 20175  
(877) 273-8324  
[www.asecert.org](http://www.asecert.org)

## RELATED OCCUPATIONAL GUIDES

Stock Clerks	No. 74
Counter and Rental Clerks	No. 511
Retail Salespersons	No. 536
Adjustment Clerks	No. 562

## OCCUPATIONAL CODE REFERENCES

**SOC** (*Standard Occupational Classification*)  
Parts Salespersons 41-2022

**O\*NET** (*Occupational Information Network*)  
Parts Salespersons 41-2022.00

**OES** (*Occupational Employment Statistics*)  
Salespersons, Parts 49014